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# 10 Minute Play

by

**Tommy Jones**

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# 10 Minute Play

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## **CHARACTERS**

**AARON:** Male; an actor age 20 -50

**BEEBE:** Female; an actor near Aaron's age

**CHARLES:** The Director, age 20-60

Note: Characters are dressed comfortably in street clothes. Charles should be wearing a black turtleneck, he is scruffy, maybe with a pencil behind his ear.

## **SETTING**

*The play takes place on a bare stage. The stage is empty when the play begins.*

## 10 Minute Play

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AT RISE: *An empty stage. After a moment, CHARLES enters carrying a small pile of disorganized papers. He stops mid-stage.*

CHARLES

*(To AUDIENCE)*

Just a moment. We're doing something called "10 Minute Play." *(Looks at notes)* It's supposed to have two actors, a table, one hand prop, etc. etc. I'm the director, Charles. We are about ready to start. You'll know we've started when Beebe comes on stage. You'll like Beebe, she's... well, you'll see.

*CHARLES crosses extreme stage right (or left), to indicate that he is logically offstage, but does not actually exit. BEEBE enters holding a piece of paper. She speaks to AARON offstage.*

BEEBE

*(To AARON offstage)*

OK, let's go.

AARON, *Off*

*(Yelling)*

What am I supposed to do?

BEEBE

*(Glances at paper)*

It says we're supposed to have a table.

AARON, *Off*

There's a folding table back here.

BEEBE

Bring it.

*AARON enters lugging a folding table.*

AARON

So where does this go?

BEEBE

*(Consults paper)*

Doesn't say. Just set it up here, I guess. Center stage.

*AARON drops the folded table on the floor.*

AARON

Done!

BEEBE

No, I think you're supposed to unfold the legs.

AARON

Oh. *(Sets up the table properly)* There!

BEEBE

Yes, that's better.

*Pause; AARON and BEEBE look out at the AUDIENCE.*

AARON

Now what?

BEEBE

*(Looks at paper)*

Chairs. There are supposed to be chairs.

AARON

There were a bunch of chairs backstage.

BEEBE

What kind?

AARON

Two or three rolling office chairs, a throne of some kind. One with three legs that wobbled something awful....

BEEBE

*(Looks at paper)*

How about...*(Reading)* "Two simple chairs without armrests?"

AARON

Yeah, I saw a couple of black ones.

BEEBE

Get 'em.

Get ‘em what? AARON

Get ‘em PLEASE! BEEBE

Just “Please?” AARON

Get ‘em... “Darling?” BEEBE

You got it, dearie! AARON

*AARON exits to get chairs.*

BEEBE  
Now, what to do? (*Glances at paper*) Oh! A play! How quaint! (*Shouts*) Aaron! We’re doing a play!

AARON  
*(Offstage)*  
All right! What play?

BEEBE  
*(Consults paper again)*  
It doesn’t say.

*AARON enters with two chairs.*

AARON  
Where do these go?

BEEBE  
I’m not sure.

*AARON sets the chairs down center stage in front of the table, facing one another. AARON sits in one, BEEBE sits in the other.*

BEEBE  
*(Checks paper)*  
It doesn’t say. It just doesn’t say.

AARON  
Let me see.

*AARON takes the paper.*

AARON, *Continued*

It says it's supposed to be a play.

BEEBE

But what play? What can we do with one table and two chairs?

AARON

*(Looking at paper)*

It says we can have a "hand prop"

BEEBE

I have a fabulous prop handgun backstage! It's a Colt 45! We could...

AARON

Do a murder mystery!

BEEBE

Oh, let's!

AARON

Wait, wait. That won't work. There are only two of us. If one dies, it's pretty obvious who the murderer is.

BEEBE

Oh. Wait, I know! We could kill an audience member!

CHARLES

*(At edge of stage)*

Beebe, you already have the allowed hand prop.

AARON

Who's there? *(Looks around; sees CHARLES)*

CHARLES

I'm Charles. I'm the director.

BEEBE

*(Excited; to AARON)*

We have a director!

AARON

Great! So, Chuck...

CHARLES

Charles.

AARON

Sorry Charlie. You're the director, right?

CHARLES

*(Annoyed)*

That's what it says on my dressing room door.

BEEBE

*(Aside; to AARON)*

Dressing room? Did you get a dressing room?

AARON

No, but...

BEEBE

And why does a director need a dressing room?

AARON

Right. How hard is it to put on a black turtleneck?

BEEBE

Exactly! So why don't...

CHARLES

Are we ready to get on with this?

AARON

Sure. Beebe?

BEEBE

Of course.

CHARLES

OK then. Let's start over.

AARON

Err, two things, Chuckie...

CHARLES

*(Annoyed)*

What?

AARON

You said we already have the hand prop? *(Holds hand upwards and empty)* I don't have a hand prop.

CHARLES

The piece of paper.

BEEBE

A little piece of paper counts?

CHARLES

It counts.

AARON

OK, so, next question. Just exactly what play are we supposed to be doing?

CHARLES

What?

BEEBE

You see, we only have this one page of instructions. *(Takes paper from AARON, waves it about, looks at it)* And it's not very specific.

AARON

*(Takes paper)*

Yeah, it just says things like "one table", "two chairs", "one hand prop"

CHARLES

Which you have.

BEEBE

Do you mean that we are expected to put on a play with just this?

CHARLES

Thornton Wilder did.

AARON

Oh, no no no no no no no no. Not "Our Town"!

BEEBE

*(Takes paper)*

And it says we can only have three characters, "Our Town" has seven or eight main characters...

AARON

And a dozen minor ones!

BEEBE

And a ladder!

AARON

Right! We don't even have a ladder!

*AARON mimes climbing a ladder.*

CHARLES

Well, improvise!

AARON

*(Angry)*

Chuckles! How the heck are we supposed to make a play out of nothing?

CHARLES

*(Icily)*

Do the best you can.

AARON

*(Pause)*

All righty, then. We took an improv class at Second City...

BEEBE

Yes! I remember. We need something from the audience...

*ACTORS pretend to prompt the AUDIENCE. They ignore whatever is suggested and continue with the scripted dialog. A "plant" in the AUDIENCE could be used to shout the needed prompts. Ideally, the AUDIENCE should think that their suggestions are being used.*

AARON

Right, what were those err... prompty things?

BEEBE

We need a setting!

AARON

Like, someplace two people might meet!

BEEBE

*(To AUDIENCE)*

OK, everyone, tell me someplace two people might meet.

*BEEBE encourages the audience; listens for suggestions.*

AARON

What's that? I heard "bullfight".

BEEBE

*(To AUDIENCE)*

Now we need a relationship, like “mother and son” or “Captain and crewman” ...

AARON

Come on, shout it out! *(Pause; wait for AUDIENCE response)* I heard “Student and Teacher.”

BEEBE

Oh, that’s a good one!

*AARON assumes the role of a teacher with a bad Spanish accent.*

AARON

Welcome to your first day of bullfighting school.

BEEBE

I’m ready. What do we do first?

AARON

The first lesson is to learn to avoid the bull.

*AARON picks up a chair and charges at BEEBE, the legs of the chair acting as horns.*

BEEBE

*(Leaps aside, matador style, avoiding AARON’s charge)*

Ole’!

AARON

Very good! Now the lances!

*AARON charges again. BEEBE dodges and then mimes stabbing a sword into his back.*

BEEBE

*(Triumphantly)*

Donde Esta La Biblioteca!

AARON

*(His dying words)*

I am spent. Remember me to Miguel De Cervantes.

*AARON collapses on stage. He leaves the chair somewhere near its original position.*

BEEBE

*(Kneels before the fallen bull)*

You were a noble adversary....

CHARLES

Cut! No, no. Come on, do something more...

BEEBE

More what?

CHARLES

I don't know. More like a play, more "theatrical".

AARON

*(Frustrated)*

With what!

BEEBE

We do have a table, and two chairs, and—

AARON

*(Yelling; frustrated)*

A piece of paper! One sheet of crumbly eight and a half by eleven wrinkled piece of paper!  
*(Takes the paper from BEEBE)* What shall we do, origami? *(Folds paper furiously and haphazardly; displays a wadded-up mess)* There! It's... It's... What?

BEEBE

It's a... magic token! The One... Wad!

AARON

The One Wad?

BEEBE

The One Wad to rule them all. and in the darkness... remind them!

AARON

The One Wad to bring them all and, err...

BEEBE

Eventually...

AARON

Decline them!

*AARON holds wad of paper up high.*

AARON and BEEBE

*(Singing a high note)*

Ahhhhh!

*CHARLES exits.*

BEEBE

We'll need a castle.

AARON

Right!

*AARON shoves the wad of paper into his pocket and grabs a chair. BEEBE gets the other chair. They position the chairs in front of and near the ends of the table. AARON and BEEBE take the table and flip it over onto the chair seats. The legs of the table point skyward.*

AARON

It's a castle, not just **any** castle, but Castle ...

BEEBE

"Table Legs!" No, that's no good ...

AARON

I know, it's castle "Banquet!"

BEEBE

Which... disappears!

AARON and BEEBE

"Through some quaint device!"

*AARON and BEEBE grab the table and fling it upstage. Crash.*

AARON

*(Sits down)*

Shakespeare is always good!

BEEBE

Yeah! *(Sits)*

AARON

But we've lost our castle.

We still have the chairs.

BEEBE

AARON  
*(Fishes paper from pocket)*  
And the One Wad.

BEEBE  
*(Calls out)*  
Charles? Was that all right? Charles?

AARON  
*(Pause; yells)*  
Chuck Puppies! Oh Chuckster! *(Pause; to BEEBE)* Seems like our director is gone.

BEEBE  
Now what?

AARON  
*(Drops to one knee facing BEEBE)*  
But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?

BEEBE  
*(Stands on chair)*  
Ay, me!

AARON  
She speaks!

BEEBE  
O Romeo, Romeo, I really don't know this speech, Romeo.

AARON  
Same here. Something about a rose.

BEEBE  
A rose has risen, a rose arose.

AARON  
Moses supposes his toeses are roses.

BEEBE  
But Moses supposes ... mistakenly!

CHARLES  
*(CHARLES enters, still very near the edge of the stage)*  
This is NOT a musical!

AARON

Chick! You're back!

CHARLES

Oh course. I only went out to vomit after your "Lord of the Things" tribute.

AARON

Thanks a lot Chuck-e-cheesier.

BEEBE

Charles! You're the director! What shall we do? I don't have a script!

AARON

And we're down to two chairs and a wadded-up piece of paper.

**This is Not the End of the Play**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**